

CO-OPERATION ON THE NILE BUT C* AN EXAMPLE

By MOHAMMED KHALIL IBRAHIM,
President, P.E.T.C. Nile Waters



Mr. Mohamed Khalil Ibrahim
*President Egyptian Technical
Organization for Nile Water*

INTRODUCTION

During the past sixty years of this century, the population of the world has doubled itself, the water consumption for domestic use has gone up many times, the area irrigated has increased more than four times and the demand of fresh water for industry is also increasing.

For all these reasons combined, the problem of the water rights between riparian countries on the international rivers became an urgent and pressing one. This calls for technical co-operation between countries sharing one river basin to enable planning and development of such basins for the benefit of the countries concerned.

Therefore the 1959 Nile Water Agreement between the United Arab Republic and the Republic of the Sudan stipulated the necessity for realization of the technical co-operation in the problems of the Nile waters. To assure this spirit of co-operation, at all times, a joint technical Commission had to be established. Each country is represented on this commission by an equal number of their experts in the Nile matters.

The main functions of this Commission are to control the river and conduct all hydrological studies necessary for the increase of the Nile Yield.

The Commission operates a large number of gauging stations covering the main Nile and its tributaries in the Sudan for recording of the discharges and stages along all these reaches. The gauging operation is conducted by the Egyptian Irrigation in the Sudan and the Hydrological Division of the Sudan Ministry of Irrigation. All the data collected pours into the secretariat office of the Commission in Khartoum for analysis and studies.

The Commission in this respect also draws the regulation rules for the reservoirs in the Sudan and U.A.R. and supervises the execution of these rules to enable the two governments to draw their agreed shares of water.

The Commission is also conducting a vast programme of hydrometeorological studies in upper reaches of the White Nile in an effort to increase the yield of the river to meet future needs of water and to cope with the increasing demands for agricultural expansion in the two countries. This co-operation has been culminated by the agreement of the two sides of the commission on a unified programme for the completion of the investigations and studies for the above-mentioned projects. These studies aim at drawing up agreed plans for the projects in order to be submitted to the two governments for their approval. When these projects are completed and their benefits materialize, it will be a clear proof of the benefits of the sincere co-operation between the two countries.

* P.J.T.C.—Permanent Joint Technical Commission for Nile Waters

It is very satisfying that now the activities of the Commission extend to participate in the Hydromet survey of the catchments of Lakes Victoria, Kyoga and Albert with the assistance of the United Nations Special Fund. The participation of the five governments in this important project is a manifestation of international co-operation.

It is realized that technical co-operation and co-ordination of studies and collection of basic data in this great river is very vital to all the Nile countries.

Following the 1959 Nile Water Agreement between the Sudan and U.A.R., it was possible for the Government of U.A.R. to construct the High Aswan Dam, an over year storage reservoir with a maximum capacity of 157 milliard M^3 . The High Aswan Dam has enabled the two countries to control the flood of the Nile in this great reservoir preventing it from flowing down to the Mediterranean, and thus making it available for the use of the two countries. The High Aswan Dam is expected to offer the solution to guarantee an average flow of the river to enable the two governments to draw their shares of water, by meeting the deficiency in dry years from the surplus of good years.

Presenting this paper on the occasion of the inauguration of the Hydrometeorological Survey of the Catchments of the Equatorial Lakes is another example showing the co-operative spirit that dominates the commission. It also ensures, beyond doubt, the fruitful results gained from international co-operation in such an important technical field as that of the Nile.